

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT APPLYING TO COLLEGE

Students basically have six main choices after finishing their post-secondary education:

1. Entering a program at a university (public or private)
2. Entering a program at a college (public or private)
3. Entering an apprenticeship
4. Entering the military (further education this way)
5. Entering the workforce
6. Taking a “gap year”

This section will give general information about **applying to college**.

- Students applying to a college within Ontario will use the **Ontario College Application Service (OCAS)**. This is the central portal for all publicly-funded colleges in Ontario.
- Students applying to a private college, or a college outside of Ontario must go to each college’s individual website to check for admission requirements, admission forms and registration costs / due dates.
- Students applying to American schools will be required to submit either SAT or ACT scores – or both. Check with the school you’re applying to, to see what the requirements are. We generally recommend that students write their SAT / ACT tests twice to improve their scores. Some programs may be in universities and some may be in colleges.
- It is recommended that students who want to attend college start investigating programs in **GRADE 11** so that they can properly plan their grade 12 year to meet any admission requirements for their prospective program.
- Students should partake in any college exploration activities offered at the high schools. Locally, Confederation College will offer an annual Open House in November for grades 11 and 12 students. As well, some Ontario colleges are represented at College Information Program (UIP) day that occurs annually in the fall, hosted by Confederation College.
- Information about programs at Ontario colleges can also be discovered through one easy online portal: www.ontariocolleges.ca
- Information about transfers from college programs to university programs can be found through the online portal: www.ontransfer.ca
- Remember that colleges may differ from one another with regard to policies and requirements. Check their websites carefully and ask for clarification if needed.

- Colleges will communicate with students through e-mail. Students should have a current e-mail account and check their security filters to allow e-mails from colleges.
- College programs will normally require an OSSD (high school diploma) with grade 12 English at the college level. Students who graduate with workplace level courses can investigate bridging programs such as College Access that is offered at Confederation College.
- College programs will also often require certain pre-requisite courses, and may require certain marks in these courses to be considered for acceptance.
- Most colleges will accept repeated courses, and look at the higher mark for that course.
- College programs generally require a minimum 60% overall average of courses taken in the grade 12 year (this may be a combination of grade 11 and 12 courses). This marks average requirement can be higher in competitive programs.
- On the college's website, check out any "**future students**" categories. Programs may be organized alphabetically or according to each department. There is normally a department co-ordinator responsible for programs that students can contact for additional, specific information.
- **Certificate** programs are normally 1 year in length. **Diploma** programs are normally 2 years in length. **Advanced diploma** programs are normally 3 years in length.
- Many college programs offer co-operative learning experiences, and many also offer international study experiences. This will differ from college to college.
- Many college programs have articulation / transfer agreements with universities if students desire to continue their education. College students must normally complete their diploma program and may be required to have a certain GPA (grade point average) to qualify. The amount of courses they will be given credit for at the university will differ from university to university. Always check with the school you are wanting to go to after college, to see how they can assist you with the transfer.
- Some college programs are offered in conjunction with a university and vice-versa. Admission requirements may change depending on if the student is

entering a diploma (college) program or an undergraduate degree (university) program.

- Most colleges have “**admissions and recruitment**” personnel to help students with information about programs, requirements, tuition etc. You can access these people by phone, e-mail or sometimes live chat lines depending on the college.
- Colleges offer campus tours throughout the year. Some may offer financial bursaries / assistance to students who come from a distance. This will vary from college to college. Many websites also offer virtual tours.
- Students apply to an Ontario college through OCAS. They will have to create accounts, activate the accounts and then complete the application process and pay the fee. The application website opens in October. Students can complete the online application from any computer. Guidance counsellors can assist with this process if needed.
- There is a fee for applying to college. The fee grants the student 5 choices – but no more than 3 programs at one college. The base fee for this year is \$95, and it is non-refundable.
- Some college programs will have additional requirements as well, such as a portfolio submission or an audition. Some colleges may require that a student complete a personal statement of experience to accompany their application. If it is not required but recommended, it would be in the student’s best interest to do it anyway.
- Colleges receive students’ grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 marks. These are automatically sent to OCAS by the school. The basis of admission is normally the grade 12 marks. Students are informed that offers are conditional and are based on continuation of good marks / meeting program requirements; the college reserves the right to revoke any offers.
- Colleges will often have 2-3 rounds of admission offers. Once students apply, they will receive responses anytime from February to April (this is not under the high school’s control), so patience is needed.
- Some colleges will give students alternate offers if they do not get admission to their first choice.
- There is a final date by which students must accept their programs. Some colleges may also require monetary deposits at this time. We recommend that

students start deciding in April, as school-based scholarships are often based on confirming post-secondary destinations.

- Most colleges have scholarships available to students. Entrance scholarships are based on marks and are granted upon admission to the school; they may or may not require additional applications. Additional scholarships will normally require the completion of application forms. Check the “**financial aid**” section of each college’s website for information on scholarships.
- The **Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)** governs student loans. Applications are normally available in the spring. OSAP can also offer bursaries to students (which do not need to be repaid) upon review of their application. Further information on OSAP can be found at:
<https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPPortal>
- Tuition amounts will vary from college to college, and program to program. Residence fees will also vary.
- Many colleges will offer guaranteed residence spots to first-year students, provided that the student completes all required documentation and meets marks requirements (if applicable). Read the residence information very carefully and note any deadlines for applications, deposits etc. Most first-year residents will be required to purchase meal plans also.
- Colleges may also have sites dedicated to their extra-curricular activities and any athletic programs for students who are interested in these.
- Colleges have student success centres to aid students in their transition to post-secondary education. Students with IEP’s are encouraged to self-identify and become aware of the accommodations and resources available to them as these will vary from college to college.

Students can make an appointment with their high school guidance counsellor for information or assistance with their transition to post-secondary education.